

**COLORADO CANYONS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA**  
**Rabbit Valley Working Group Meeting Minutes**  
**July 8, 2002**

Attendees:

Ken Currey	Mike Click	Chad Niehaus
Gene Arnesen	Jim Cooper	John Potter
Sue Benjamin	Dave Dunsmoor	Lovell Sasser
Nadja Brozina	Dave Farny	Julie Stotler
Arleta Carr	N. J. Fulmer	Russ Von Koch
Kathy Click	Neal McKinstry	

**Greetings and Introductions**

Chairman Dave Farny called the meeting to order.

**Working Group Discussions**

Jim Cooper, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Transportation Planner, explained that he has completed the trail plan but needs to discuss its details in-house prior to presenting to the Working Group. Jim addressed the general ideas of the travel management plan, and stressed his objective in trying to provide for the future yet maintain a sustainable plan. Jim explained the overall concept of his proposal, emphasizing that his proposal may not be what is actually offered. Many were opposed to the idea of a trail on Wild Horse Mesa, and feel this issue was addressed in the Ruby Canyon Plan and does not need to be revisited. They feel there should be no tires in this area, including those of mountain bikes.

Dave is anxious to have the Working Group's alternatives printed and provided to the group members as soon as possible.

Trail designation was discussed, and the group made it clear that all trails need to be designated within Rabbit Valley.

Gene Arnesen, BLM Outdoor Recreation Planner, pointed out that managing impact through maintenance is a good alternative.

Lovell Sasser stated her position as having no problem with sharing trails in Rabbit Valley, with the exception of Wild Horse Mesa.

The group wants the Gibson road opened and possibly gated at the private property boundary. Dave pointed out another road providing river access.

Dave also reported that he met with Robin Lacy, BLM Realty Specialist, on the Joufflas property. Chris Joufflas wants to exchange for land located in Wolcott, Colorado, and the town is reluctant to give up the land. Robin is doing all she can, as is Catherine Robertson, BLM Grand Junction Field Manager, even though the majority of her time is occupied with addressing the fire situation.

Ken Currey broached the topic of private property to the Northwest Resource Advisory Council (RAC), and its members feel that the Working Group should write a Resolution for presenting to the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area (CCNCA) Advisory Council. The CCNCA Advisory Council can then, in turn, present the Resolution to the RAC.

Dave drafted a Resolution regarding private lands within the National Conservation Area (NCA), and wants it typed and sent to Ken for presenting to the CCNCA Advisory Council.

Other issues and alternatives discussed:

- Move the fence line located north of I-70
- Possible target-shooting range site located north of I-70
- Possible campsites, to be shown on the map

Jim feels that all alternatives should be placed on the map for future discussions.

Ken went over Chad Niehaus's proposal for the Utah Rims area, an area currently under management of BLM Moab, Utah, and adjacent to Rabbit Valley. This proposal was presented in the Advisory Council meeting.

Management of Utah Rims through the BLM Grand Junction field office was discussed, and the proposal has progressed little. The group still wants to pursue this as a way to ensure continuity between the Rabbit Valley and Utah Rims areas. The group's recommendation for BLM Grand Junction to assume management for both areas has already been given to the Advisory Council. BLM Moab is currently reviewing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), drafted by Jim and presented by Greg Gnesios, CCNCA Manager.

Jim explained that BLM Utah has not yet developed an official planning process, and to date, a Federal Register notice has not been published. John Potter mentioned that he recently saw a notice on Utah and will e-mail the information to Jim.

Lovell wants to see designated horse trails north of I-70, and Jim's observation is that motorized recreation is not appropriate because of the fragile soils and related land health issues. Jim does not want to ban licensed vehicles in the area, however, because existing county roads cannot be closed.

N. J. Fulmer would like section numbers reflected on the maps to facilitate pointing out the various areas being discussed. She would also like to see trail numbers shown on the maps.

The planning process timeline and related complications were discussed.

Dave commented on cheatgrass and feels it a waste of time and money to attempt to get rid of it. N. J. expressed her concern with the animals depending upon food sources other than cheatgrass.

The next meeting was set for August 6, at 5:30 p.m. if held at the BLM office, or 5:45 p.m. if held in Fruita. The group recommended having the meeting in Fruita, if possible.

The meeting was adjourned.